

TREE INVENTORIES

Trees are an important component of a community's infrastructure and one of its greatest assets. Trees create a desirable place to live and provide the community with such benefits as improved air quality, energy conservation, and mental health, increased property values, and reduced stormwater runoff.

To mitigate public safety issues and retain the benefits trees provide, it is recommended that communities develop an Urban Forest Management Plan. This will not only help the community prepare for EAB and other invasive pests, but also will outline overall management, budgeting, and long-term planning for the urban forest. Components to develop an Urban Forest Management Plan are listed below.

One of the first steps in planning for city-wide management is a tree inventory to guide budget and management decisions. A complete street tree inventory is recommended. This information will help guide decisions about tree maintenance, estimate the cost of dealing with other declining trees, and determine a replacement planting list that diversifies the urban canopy.

If a complete tree inventory is not possible, an problem tree inventory of all ash trees in preparation for EAB and sampling of the remaining trees, for example, is recommended. A sample inventory can be conducted by collecting inventory information of street segments in different quadrants of town. Both will give details about the size, species, condition and location of trees, with the all ash inventory identifying trees with suspected EAB signs and symptoms.

A tree inventory is a long term investment that will pay off in the form of a healthy urban forest that offers many benefits, an improved community, and a more easily understood plan for managing costs.

For communities with populations under 5,000, assistance is available. For more information, contact Emma Bruemmer at Emma.Hanigan@dnr.iowa.gov or call 515-281-5600.

Further information is available at the DNR Forestry Bureau's Community Tree Inventory webpage. <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/Forestry/UrbanForestry/CommunityTreeInventories.aspx>



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